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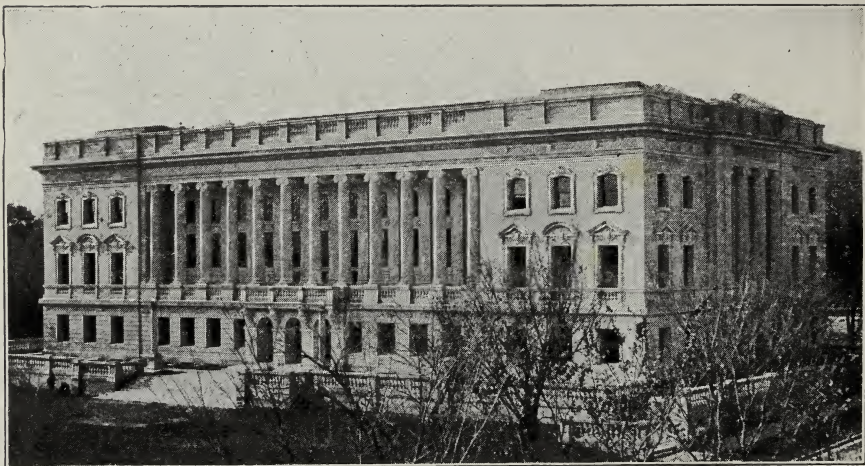
LEAFLET No. 3

Labor Leaders and Labor Literature

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HISTORICAL LIBRARY BUILDING AT MADISON, WIS.

Housing nearly half a million volumes. The collection of newspaper files (about 15,000 bound volumes) in importance ranks second only to that of the Library of Congress at Washington. In addition for the study of the Labor Movement in America it is the strongest library in the country.

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Labor Leaders and Labor Literature

"I saved labor papers for many years, but in one way or another my collection has been destroyed," is a common remark of leaders in the Labor Movement. "When we moved that last time," or, "At house-cleaning time," or, "When our house burned," are expressions that indicate the occasions for the loss of much valuable material needed by the student and historian.

But here and there throughout the country one may still find old "war-horses" in the Labor Movement who will bring forth records of the great Eight-Hour movement of forty years ago, and show with undying enthusiasm the contemporaneous accounts of scores of co-operative societies "doing business on the Rochdale plan." To these men, the mention of such labor papers as **Fincher's Trades Review** (Phila., '63-'66); the **Voice** (Boston, '64-'67); and the **Workingman's Advocate** (Chicago, '64-'76), brings a glow of honest pride and a train of glorious reminiscences. Some still live who hark back to the

time when William Weitling was publishing **Die Republik der Arbeiter** (New York, 1850-'55); and some recall those **Periodical Letters** that Josiah Warren addressed "To the Men and Women of Labor and Sorrow." It is a genuine pleasure to meet these men. It is worth while to catch some of their enthusiasm. Many of them entered the Labor Movement along with Horace Greeley and Albert Brisbane,—and Hawthorne's "Blithedale Romance" reminds not a few of the humanitarian awakening which roused the great minds and hearts of the period of fifty and sixty years ago.

To one who has interviewed scores of these men and thereby caught an intimate glimpse of their early strife days, the thought of such real pioneers as Seth Luther, Eli Moore, and "Fanny" Wright of the almost forgotten labor struggle of the thirties, brings a feeling of profound regret that our permanent records are so few. Who would guess from the written history of that time, that more than sixty papers "devoted to the cause of the working man" were published in this country during the decade 1827-'37? By

some happy chance a few of these papers have lain buried away in obscure corners for three-quarters of a century, and anyone with half a soul, who turns their yellowed pages and reads their story, must feel somewhat like one who stands before a monument of some past civilization, as he realizes that

“Even a rag like this
Survives him, his tomb,
And all that’s his.”

Passing down through this pioneer period, with its ten-hour movement and National Industrial Congresses,—on through the similar movements of the middle of the century,—and the National Labor Union history just after the Civil War, with its leaders like Wm. H. Sylvis, Ira Steward, and “Dick” Trevellick,—one finds the records (if one finds them at all) very difficult to obtain. Nearly every city, and almost every trade organization of national

scope had its labor paper. Convention proceedings were published in pamphlet form, constitutions and by-laws ran through several editions, and yet, except for a few scattering copies, where are they?

Anyone who has tried must know how difficult it is to collect complete files of labor papers published even within the past ten years. It means days and nights of fruitless searching—disappointments only here and there brightened by real “finds”—but it also means meeting with men in every city who struggle hopefully on in spite of obstacles, men who have that “vision” without which “we perish.” Though finally weakened in body, they do not wither at the top.

To meet on sympathetic ground men like George E. McNeill, Edward H. Rogers and Frank K. Foster; to talk for an hour with “Joe” Buchanan, the mysterious Victor Drury, F. A. Sorge, Lucien Sanial, John Jarrett, A. Strasser, and Benjamin R. Tucker; to rummage through barrels and boxes of half-forgotten lore with Thomas Phillips, Frederick Turner, “Joe” La-

badie, Voltairine de Claire, and "Pete" McGuire—has been no small privilege. The mere mention of these few from a long list of names will call up glad and sad memories in the minds of thousands who can say

"I have eaten your bread and salt,
I have drunk your water and wine,
The deaths ye died I have watched beside,
And the lives that ye led were mine."

It's a great story, and some time when it is rightly told it will mean much to future generations of men. Along these lines of struggle, of self-sacrifice for an ideal that beckons ever onward toward a bigger and cleaner and more generous humanity, have been fought the great battles in American history.

If the signs of the times indicate anything to the man who walks among

men, it is that a still greater struggle is before us. For the good of our own people, for the cause of civilization, every lamp of experience should be made to throw its light upon the causes and conditions of our present industrial order.

The field of Labor opens up a splendid view of this work. About twenty years ago Professor Ely published a small volume on the "Labor Movement in America." It was a mere sketch, but it served to point out the possibilities for a more intensive study. In recent years a number of people have become interested in such a plan and they have organized the American Bureau of Industrial Research, to carry on the work. This is made possible through the private subscriptions of interested men and women throughout the country.

The work has already made substantial progress. Into a central fireproof building have been gathered records which reflect great industrial movements hardly mentioned by American historians, and yet full of significance

in their relation to the methods of social control. Hundreds of papers (including those mentioned above) and thousands of pamphlets, circulars and letters, reflecting the movements of the **people** in their efforts to maintain their sovereignty, here form a great Library of Labor. The best that all other libraries of the country could offer on this subject has been transcribed and brought together to swell the collection of original material. The Quarterly Journal of Economics, February, 1907, contains an article "Labor Organization and Labor Politics, 1827-'37," prepared by John R. Commons, one of the directors of the Bureau of Industrial Research. This is but a hint of the exhaustive research already made by the Bureau. Plans provide for reprints, in several volumes, of the rarest and most valuable documents. These will be sold to the libraries of the country at cost of printing alone. Then, too, there will be a "History of Industrial Democracy in America," written in bright, readable style, and handled by one of the best known publishers.

A large amount of editing has already been done for this purpose, but many important records are still wanting. Several labor leaders, upon learning of the earnest efforts of the Bureau, have given their entire collections to further its purposes. Co-operation and interest of this kind is encouraging, and the primary work involved in collecting, classifying and cataloging will be appreciated by generations yet unborn. All records are carefully bound and placed in the permanent collection in this fireproof building, where they may be used freely by anyone at any time. A book-plate, with the name of the contributor, is provided for insertion in every volume received. This preserves the identity of new acquisitions, and furnishes a permanent recognition of the interest and co-operation of the contributor. Anyone having copies of papers, convention proceedings, constitutions and letters is urged to communicate with the American Bureau of Industrial Research, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin.

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